

"PARLOR SOLDIERS."

SELECTED BY MRS. P. F. ECKERLE.

There are too many, we fear, who while they imagine themselves ready and even anxious to do God's work, in reality are stipulating that the work shall be agreeable and suited to the talents they fancy they possess. Such a young lady was Miss Peyton, who called on her pastor one morning to offer her services for whatever work he might have for her, an action which gladdened the worthy man's heart.

"Thank you so much, Miss Peyton," he said warmly. "You do not know how much encouragement you have given me. The Lord is able to raise up workers for his special fields, is he not? I feel sure others will come now."

"Yes, I thought perhaps there might be those who were waiting for some one to take the lead," said Miss Peyton, complacently. "I am ready for work, Dr. Ainsworth—to do anything, to be sent anywhere."

"There is work waiting for you," returned the doctor, heartily. "A most touching case has been interesting me lately. A poor widow, with three small children, has been ill for some time, but it is hoped that a slight surgical operation will restore her to perfect health. It has been thought necessary to take her to the hospital for this operation, as she can have better care there than at her humble home. She will not be at the hospital more than three days; still she is nervously anxious over leaving her children alone for even that short time. A cousin, who is out at service, will stay with them nights, and I feel sure some of my young ladies would be willing to care for them through the day. So you see the Lord's hand can be seen in your coming to me this morning."

Marcia Peyton was silent. The thought of spending three days, or even one, taking care of "a lot of noisy, dirty little brats," as she mentally characterized them, was far from being a pleasant one.

"I do not expect you to do this alone," continued Dr. Ainsworth, as she hesitated. "I thought two or three might divide the work among them, and now that you have volunteered, it will be easier to find the others. What day, or days, can you best give to it?" Note-book and pencil were produced as he spoke. "You see," he added, with a smile, "I think I ought to give you the preference, if you have any, as you are the first in the field."

Still Marcia hesitated. "I—really—do not think I can decide—just now," she said at last, speaking very slowly. "I will send you my decision to-night."

"Very well; no doubt you will have some arrangements to make. It is quite sudden, I know," he said, politely, though his face wore a disappointed look. He was a man of prompt action, and fancied he had found in Miss Peyton a person after his own heart.

His face was still more clouded when he read the following note:

Dr. Ainsworth, my dear pastor:—I find I cannot take the work you proposed this morning. I am unaccustomed to children, and feel I have neither ability nor taste for such work. There are others, I presume, who have no talent for anything greater, who will be willing to aid you.

Very truly yours,

Marcia Peyton.

He sighed as he laid the letter down. "I confess I am disappointed in her," he said, sadly. "But I ought not to blame her too much; there are too many of us who are what Emerson called 'parlor soldiers' willing to do the pleasant things, but shunning the rugged battlefields where strength is born. I must find some one else, that is all."

STAY AT HOME EVENINGS.

One of the great mistakes of youth, producing endless mischief and ruin, is in the improper spending of the evenings. Dark was created for quiet; home is the place of quiet. Darkness is temptation to misconduct; suffering the young to be out when the light of day does not restrain them from misconduct, is training them to evil. We have already an abundant harvest of this seeding. Riots, mobs, crimes giving fearful forebodings, are the result of our youth running uncared for on evenings. What we see in these respects is deplorable enough; but what is this, compared with what we do not see?—multitudes making themselves miserable and noxious, a pest to community.

Parents should look at the truth that evening pleasures and recreations are often dearly purchased—the price, their own impaired comfort, and the blighted prospects of their offspring.

It must be obvious, that in this matter there can be no prescribed rule. There can be no interdict of all evening recreations and employments, yet here is an evil not only destructive to youth, but planting thorns in many paths, and covering many lives with desolation. The reformation demanded must proceed from judgment and conscience, and for this purpose judgment and conscience must be enlightened—heads of families must learn that the place on earth best adapted to a blessing is home; and by example and

wholesome restraint, they must teach this truth to all under them.

Especially should home be consecrated during the day of rest. Such mornings and evenings are blessed indeed, when they gather the family into the circle of converse and instruction; when parents and children, masters, apprentices and servants, meet and worship in the presence of that God who has made them and placed them in their respective stations, and has assigned them their positions, and raised them to the exalted level of the truth, that they may help each other on to honor, glory and immortality: eternal life.—*Selected.*

FRIGHTENING THE BABY.

Don't do it—don't let it be done.

Many people think it amusing, funny to see the little serene, unconscious thing start, and widen its blue eyes, and stare, uncertain whether to laugh or cry. If she cries, they continue to think it funny. If a nervous smile or a catching laugh follows, they get hilarious over their little victim, and repeat the antic or try "Booh" again. Do they think they have afforded that helpless creature an instant's happiness. Don't they know that they have given its delicate, nervous system a shock that is the beginning of the most exquisite suffering? Suppose they continue to amuse themselves, and baby does not seem to be hurt, but jumps and repeats its nervous, catching laugh, do they wait to observe her invariable crying spell? No, they get up saying, "Nice baby, isn't she?" and leave the little one to the sharp reaction of complaining wails, which the mother labors long to still, saying, probably:

"I don't see what makes baby cry so. She has been so good and cunning!"

Does the thoughtless visitor imagine herself for an instant in baby's place? Does she consider the weakness, the want of understanding, the frail hold on life itself that the tiny being has? Did she ever see an infant in convulsions? Did she ever see a child die? If she has, she may well have a fear of frightening the baby, of periling its peace, of shortening its very existence. The constitution of most children under five years of age encounter so many shocks we may not wonder at their very frequent taking off. Possibly not one lives who does not bear to maturity the seeds of complaints sown during the infantile period. Frightening the baby for amusement need not be one of them.—*Emma Mortimer White.*

THE man who does not preach with love in his heart, would do the Lord more good by keeping out of the pulpit.